

PENDING CLAIMS AS AMENDED

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for measuring a benefit of a business improvement, comprising operations of:
 - providing the business improvement to a service business with vehicles;
 - automatically receiving, from a vehicle using wireless communications, actual performance information detected by at least one vehicle sensor and provided by a vehicle operator over a predetermined period of time;
 - storing the actual performance information in a storage device;
 - retrieving the actual performance information; and
 - calculating the benefit of implementing the business improvement by comparing the actual performance information to estimated performance information determined prior to an introduction of the business improvement.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the operation of calculating the benefit of implementing the business improvement comprises calculating an actual return-on-investment of the business improvement.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the operation of calculating the benefit of implementing the business improvement comprises calculating an actual total cost of ownership.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the operation of calculating the benefit of implementing the business improvement comprises calculating an actual net present value.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the operation of calculating the benefit of implementing the business improvement comprises calculating an actual internal rate of return.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the operation of calculating the benefit of implementing the business improvement comprises calculating an actual payback period.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the operation of calculating the benefit of implementing the business improvement comprises calculating an actual cost savings.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the operation of calculating the benefit of implementing the business improvement comprises calculating an actual revenue increase.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the actual performance information comprises a time associated with a predefined event.

10. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein calculating the actual return-on-investment comprises operations of:

determining a first profitability figure over a selected time period using the actual performance information;

determining a second profitability figure over a length of time equal to the selected time period using the estimated performance information;

determining a profitability difference between the first profitability figure and the second profitability figure; and

subtracting a cost of the improvement from the profitability difference.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising an operation of entering the estimated information via a Graphical User Interface.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the estimated information is retrieved from one or more logistic information systems.

13. (Currently Amended) An apparatus measuring a benefit of a business improvement, comprising:

a system with the business improvement installed, the system comprising a service business with vehicles;

an interface for automatically receiving actual performance information from at least one vehicle sensor and entered by a vehicle operator;

a storage device for storing the actual performance information and for storing estimated performance information; and

a processor for retrieving the actual performance information for a predetermined period of time and the estimated performance information and for calculating the benefit using at least the actual performance information and the estimated performance information determined prior to an introduction of the business improvement.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the benefit comprises an actual return-on-investment of the improvement.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the actual performance information comprises a time associated with a predefined event.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the benefit comprises an actual total cost of ownership of the improvement.

17. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the benefit comprises an actual net present value of the improvement.

18. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the benefit comprises an actual internal rate of return of the improvement.

19. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the benefit comprises an actual payback period of the improvement.

20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein calculating the actual return-on-investment comprises:

determining first profitability figure over a selected time period using the actual performance information;

determining a second profitability figure over a length of time equal to the selected time period using the estimated performance information;

determining a profitability difference between the first profitability figure and the second profitability figure; and

subtracting a cost of the improvement from the profitability difference.

21. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein calculating the actual return-on-investment comprises:

determining a performance difference between actual performance information taken over a predetermined time period and estimated performance information estimated over a length of time equal to the predetermined time period;

calculating a profitability difference over the selected time period using the performance difference; and

subtracting a cost of the improvement from the profitability difference.

22. (Currently Amended) A signal-bearing medium tangibly embodying a program of machine-readable instructions executable by a digital processing apparatus to perform a method for measuring a benefit of a business improvement, said method comprising operations of:

providing the business improvement to a service business with vehicles;

automatically receiving, from a vehicle using wireless communications, actual performance information detected by at least one vehicle sensor and entered by a vehicle operator for a predetermined period of time;

storing the actual performance information in a storage device;

retrieving the actual performance information; and

calculating the benefit using at least the actual performance information and estimated performance information determined prior to an introduction of the business improvement.

23. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 22 wherein the actual performance information comprises a time associated with a predefined event.

24. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 22 wherein the operation of calculating the benefit comprises the operation of calculating an actual return-on-investment.

25. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 22 wherein the operation of calculating the benefit comprises the operation of calculating an actual total cost of ownership.

26. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 22 wherein the operation of calculating the benefit comprises the operation of calculating an actual net present value.

27. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 22 wherein the operation of calculating the benefit comprises the operation of calculating an actual internal rate of return.

28. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 22 wherein the operation of calculating the benefit comprises the operation of calculating an actual payback period.

29. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 24 wherein calculating the actual return-on-investment comprises operations of:

determining a first profitability figure over a selected time period using the actual performance information;

determining a second profitability figure over a length of time equal to the selected time period using the estimated performance information;

determining a profitability difference between the first profitability figure and the second profitability figure; and

subtracting a cost of the improvement from the profitability difference.

30. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 24 wherein calculating the actual return-on-investment comprises operations of:

determining a performance difference between actual performance information taken over a predetermined time period and estimated performance information estimated over a length of time equal to the predetermined time period;

calculating a profitability difference over the selected time period using the performance difference; and

subtracting a cost of the improvement from the profitability difference.

31. (Currently Amended) A method for measuring a benefit of a business improvement, comprising operations of:

providing the business improvement to a service business with vehicles;

receiving a first set of actual performance information sent using wireless communications from a vehicle, as detected by at least one vehicle sensor and entered by a vehicle operator;

storing said first set of actual performance information in connection with implementing a business plan over a predetermined period of time;

receiving a second set of actual performance information, received after implementation of the business improvement, sent using said wireless communications from said vehicle, as detected by at least one vehicle sensor;

storing said second set of actual performance information;

retrieving the first set and the second set of actual performance information; and

calculating the benefit of implementing the business improvement by determining a financial ratio comparing the first set and the second set of actual performance information.

32. (Original) The method of claim 31, wherein the benefit is selected from the group consisting of an actual return-on-investment, an actual total cost of ownership, an actual net present value, an actual internal rate of return, and an actual payback period.